

Cleveland Air Toxics Pilot Final Convening Report

Prepared By:

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I. INTRODUCTION

In December 2000, the U.S Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) asked the Consensus Building Institute to conduct a convening report for an air toxics pilot program in Cleveland, Ohio.

The idea of a pilot program arose out of the Integrated Urban Air Toxics Strategy, which is part of the EPA's national air toxics program to address air toxics emissions in urban emissions.¹ The program called for the initiation of pilot projects to reduce risks associated with air toxics. Air toxics are pollutants such as benzene, dioxin, mercury, and others that cause or may cause cancer or other serious health effects. The pollutants are found in both indoor and outdoor air.

The pilot has three goals: (1) reduce air toxics in Cleveland within a year; (2) ensure the project is sustainable over time within the community; and, (3) ensure the approach can be replicated in communities across the United States. A central component of this pilot is the creation of a Working Group comprised of representatives from a range of interested neighborhoods, organizations, businesses, and government agencies. This Working Group will guide the pilot project. This project also includes an evaluation of the overall process to help improve the on-going project as it moves forward and to capture key lessons and findings to ensure the success of future projects in other cities.

This convening effort included thirty-seven (37) interviews with Cleveland residents, business owners and managers, environmental groups and government agencies with an interest in air quality and air toxics in Cleveland. This convening report includes:

- Our findings from these interviews, without attribution by name or organization.
- Recommendations for the design of an Air Toxics Reduction Working Group, including groundrules, initial meeting agendas, and group composition.
- A list of potential technical resources identified in our interviews that may be of help to the Working Group once work is underway.

We want to thank the City Department of Health, the Air Pollution Advisory Committee, the Slavic Village Broadway Community Development Corporation, the St. Clair Superior Community Development Association, and all of those who gave generously of their time to speak with us about this pilot project.

CBI is a non-profit organization specializing in public policy mediation and process-based solutions to public sector problems. The convening team consisted of CBI Vice President Patrick Field, CBI Senior Consultant and Cleveland State University Professor Dr. Sanda Kaufman, CBI Graduate Associate Liora Zion, and CBI Associate, Allison Berland.

Please note that this convening report is not a legal document, technical report, formal program assessment, nor an exhaustive study of all those involved with a stake air quality in Cleveland.

¹ For more information please consult the Final Urban Air Toxics Strategy Report, 64 FR 38705, at www.epa.gov/ttn/uatw/urban/urbanpg.

The assessment is limited by the information gathered in the interviews CBI conducted and our interpretation of that information. As a non-partisan facilitator, CBI is not an advocate for any particular outcome or interest. CBI conducts its work in a fair, deliberate, and non-partisan fashion and is bound by the Society for Professionals in Dispute Resolution's (SPIDR) Code of Ethics.

Methodology

The assessment is based on confidential, voluntary interviews conducted between April 16 and May 30, 2001. Individuals interviewed were initially drawn from a list provided by the Cleveland Department of Public Health. In interviews with CBI, participants identified additional individuals whom CBI subsequently contacted.

The majority of interviewees represent neighborhood groups, environmental advocacy groups, businesses and trade associations, and city, county, state, and federal agencies and elected officials. As noted in the box below, CBI organized the interviewees into the following broad stakeholder categories. Please note that neighborhood interviews included meetings with groups of residents. A full listing of interviewees is included in Attachment A.

STAKEHOLDER GROUP	# INTERVIEWS
Elected Officials and Affiliates	3
Environmental Advocacy Groups	6
Government Agencies	7
Neighborhoods	5
Resources	4
Sources	12
TOTAL	37

Many interviews were conducted face-to-face in Cleveland. Due to scheduling constraints, some interviews were conducted by telephone. Approximately 45 minutes to an hour was spent speaking with each interviewee. CBI explained that answers would be confidential (i.e. particular statements would not be attributed to individuals or organizations).

During the interviews, CBI staff asked respondents to share their perspectives on the following topic areas:

- air quality in Cleveland;
- the pilot's approach and timeline as described by CBI;
- what would constitute success in the pilot;

- who should be represented in the stakeholder group.

Please see the attached interview protocol used by CBI staff as a general guide for conducting the interviews (Attachment B).

Upon completion of the interviews, the CBI assessment team reviewed the information presented in the interviews, and prepared the draft convening report. The draft report was shared with all interviewees in draft. CBI incorporated the comments received and have issued this final report. Please note that all errors and omissions in this final assessment remain the sole responsibility of CBI.